

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A communications system includes a network coupled to various network elements. The network elements include user systems that contain protocol-aware applications that are aware of the protocol used to establish streaming-type communications (e.g., audio, video, or multimedia) or text-based communications over the network. The protocol used for such communications may include the Session Initiation Protocol (SIP), H.323, or other protocols. Each of the user systems includes a rules engine that is capable of collecting information from a SIP message and comparing the information to criteria or rules that have been entered by a user. When a match occurs, one or more target applications or other software routines are launched to perform predetermined tasks. The launched applications or other software routines may include a web browser, for example.